



W.D. & H.O. WILLS HOLDINGS LIMITED  
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MEDIA RELEASE

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## RESEARCH FAILS TO LINK ENVIRONMENTAL TOBACCO SMOKE WITH LUNG CANCER

**48 Studies Globally Find "Virtually Meaningless" Risk  
- Chief Scientist: "Need to Re-Think Bans on Smoking in Public Places" -**

A review by a group of scientists from top European Universities who looked at 48 studies from around the world fails to show a link between exposure to Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS) and lung cancer, according to W.D. & H.O. Wills (Australia), one of the nation's leading tobacco companies.

The studies measure statistical risk, and report a relative risk of lung cancer from ETS, or so-called passive smoking, for non-smokers of 1.01 from smokers at home to 1.04 from exposure at work. These findings are just above the rating for zero risk of 1.00. Most scientists believe that relative risks below 2.00 are generally inconclusive.

"When you look at all of the science you cannot find consistent support for the proposed or existing bans on smoking in enclosed public places," said Dr Chris Proctor, Chief Scientist with British-American Tobacco, the parent company of W.D. & H.O. Wills. "Let's restore science to the debate and re-think bans on smoking in public places."

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"Public policy should not be ruled by emotion or zealotry. It should be based on fact," said Dr Proctor. "The overwhelming majority of studies on exposure to so-called passive smoking and lung cancer do not show a statistically significant risk. It is that plain and simple."

#### Spousal and Workplace Studies Compared

Two major streams of studies were compared. The first set were "Spousal Studies", which followed the non-smoking wives of men who smoked. These US-based studies reported a relative risk of lung cancer for the non-smokers of 1.01. Studies from the USA reflect the largest homogenous population group. The second set of studies on workplace smoking put the relative risk from ETS in the workplace at 1.04. Neither of these risk estimates was statistically significant.

The findings were published yesterday in London by the European Working Group on Environmental Tobacco Smoke and Lung Cancer, chaired by Professor Jeffrey Idle, Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim, Norway. The Working Group comprises six independent senior scientists with expertise in genetics, biochemistry, nutrition, statistics, clinical and molecular sciences.

The European Working Group's report concluded: "Our findings are entirely consistent with there being no elevated risk of lung cancer by exposure to ETS at work or in the home, either from a smoking parent or spouse."

The same studies also found that in everyday settings, where levels of ETS have been measured, only a few of the compounds present in tobacco smoke have been detected because of their extremely low concentrations.



Exposure to ETS was measured through personal exposure studies, tracking individuals' exposure to tobacco smoke over a set period. The European Working Group reported that the levels of smoke compounds in the air in everyday surrounds is nearly non-existent. They reported that levels are typically ten to one million times lower than those permitted for chemicals in the workplace.

"It is no wonder that the overwhelming majority of the medical statistical studies on ETS and lung cancer don't report a statistically valid increase in risk," said Dr Proctor.

W.D. & H.O. Wills (Australia) Limited is the main operating subsidiary in Australia for the Wills Holdings Group. The Company has 1,200 employees, its production facilities and Head Office are based at Pagewood in Sydney. Wills manufactures a number of well known tobacco products, including the cigarette brands Benson & Hedges and Horizon.

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